Evans-Pritchard E-4 (no date) 1948
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the Shilluk kings.[1] It is easy to determine because the shrines of dead kings are still maintained to-day where they were born and brought up. I would further suggest that the maternal descent of princes may be of great significance in that it may be the association of maternal lineages with settlements which attaches local loyalties to a particular prince or to a particular branch of the royal house. It is therefore important that the maternal clans of the Shilluk kings should be recorded by some future observer.

The Shilluk statement that kings should be put to death if they grow old or become sick and their further statement that any prince may at any time challenge the king to mortal combat, in which the king may not call for help, cannot, I think, like the mode of succession, be understood except in relation to the political structure as a whole. There is only traditional evidence that any king has ever been killed in either way but, as Mr Howell and Mr Thomson point out,[2] the belief that kings have been, or might be, so killed has political implications. The assertion that a sick or old king should be killed probably means that when some disaster falls upon the Shilluk nation the tensions inherent

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 59-136. [2] *Op. cit.* p. 11.

2 Seligman & Seligman E-6 (1909-1910) 1932
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606 provided that a child has been born and survived. A man will give his wife's mother a gun, but even then he may only enter the house of the mother-in-law if the latter is very old. He may, however, speak to her and to her sister, and to his father-in-law, but still with head averted and with the utmost ceremony and politeness.

602 A man observes ceremonial avoidance of the wives of certain of his own kinsmen. Thus, although he may enter the houses of his own and sons, cousin and son, uncle and son, he cannot visit them as freely as he can the house of his own, because he must avoid the wives of all these relatives (while with the wives of his own he may be on quite familiar terms). When he enters any of these women out of doors he may greet them, but with averted head.

609 A man may salute the wife of his ne but must not sit in the hut with her; she will leave the hut when he enters, and if he should sit upon her mat or skin it would cause ditch either to himself, his ne, or the wife of his ne. A man can never inherit the widow of his ne as can be done among some other Indian tribes, e.g. the Bari.

We now pass to the male ave whom a man must avoid. A man avoids his wife's father, but this avoidance may become less rigid after a time, just as the severity of the mother-in-law avoidance decreases. His wife's brother is treated with respect but scarcely avoided. It was said that nothing would ever relax the avoidance between a man and his wife's mother's brother (her ne); they may never speak face to face. No payments are made to him, but should the wife's ne ask for anything it could not be refused; he might ask for a spear, a canoe, or a sheep, and it must be given, but he would never ask for cattle. The same privileges are claimed by the son of the ne, the ane of the wife. A characteristic example was seen in the case of Fidwong. He spent much time in fishing and gave large quantities of the fish he caught to his wife's parents, though the little-wealth was already fully paid. When asked whether he had made or bought his canoe he looked surprised and said, "Have I not an ane jidyangja? I took it from him." The canoe belonged to the husband of his father's sister's daughter. The father of Fidwong had been ne to this girl and Fidwong as her son had inherited the privilege of the ne, his father. The girl's husband is Fidwong's ane and is he who "hates" Fidwong. The latter, however, shows respect to him and observes the avoidance rules; he did not touch the canoe himself, but sent his sons (to this instance his father's brother's son and great friend) to get it for him. It is said that a

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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sons and his *ora jalyangis* might exchange presents of sheep, the girls always being presented through a third party.

The husband of the sister, either the *ayimis* or the *ayinu*, is treated in the same way as the husband of the *ayinugis* and privileges can be claimed from him; the husband of the *nina* is also respected. Thus, though *ora* is a reciprocal term, the respect and deference shown is not mutual. The *ora* to whom deference is paid are the wife's male and female relatives. The more important of these are the mother, the father, the *na* and the *ona*, the *ama* and the *amis* of the wife, all of whom are treated with ceremonial avoidance; the *ona*, though respected, are not avoided. The *ora* from whom a man claims privileges are the husbands of sisters and cousins, especially the husbands of the *ayimis*, *ayinu*, and *ayangis* from whose kraals-wealth he has received cattle.

There is no avoidance between women; a woman does not avoid her husband's mother.

A man must kill a bull at the death feast of an *ora*, the father, mother or brother of his wife, and if he lives near his wife's family he kills a sheep on the day of the death. He must not see the corpse or assist at the burial.

From the above it will be seen that the conception of *ora* is far from simple. It might at first be supposed that anyone of the wife's clan was *ora* and must consequently be treated with respect, but this is not so; the wife's sister, who is naturally of her clan, is not *ora* and is treated with familiarity; the wife's father's sister (her *ayin*) is not avoided. Unfortunately we did not ascertain how the latter was addressed, and do not know of any special duties of the *ayin* towards her brother's daughter, though these to his son are important. But the wife's mother's brother (her *na*), who must belong to a different clan from the wife, is *ora*.

There seem to be four aspects of the *ora* relationship:—

(a) The primary attitude to the wife's mother, extended on classificatory lines.

(b) The attitude towards those relatives of the wife to whom she stands in some definite relationship.

(c) The attitude a man observes towards the husbands of his own female relatives. Relationships (b) and (c) are reciprocal but the behaviour pattern is not identical.

(d) A woman's attitude towards the relatives of her husband.

We may now consider these different aspects of the avo relationship in detail.

(1) The avoidance of the mother-in-law is so common a custom in Africa as to be considered habitual. All the implications of the mother-in-law situation cannot be discussed here, but there are two elements in the custom which must be borne in mind—the respect due to the mother of the wife, and the feeling that there must be no hint of sexual impropriety with her. The Shilluk who murmured his wife's father's brother's wife to our censor said that she would complain to other women that she had seen his "sakabana". Among a people like the Shilluk, who when they wear any garment only have a cloth over the shoulder, leaving the genitals exposed, this objection seems remarkable, and does point to the sexual nature of the avoidance. So, by demonstrating in a ceremonial manner that there can never be any possibility of sexual intercourse between himself and any woman whom he treats as mother-in-law, he leaves open an approach to her daughter. If a young Shilluk, who has not yet established sufficient cattle to marry, desires to exercise his right and consort with the wife of one of his avo, he must treat her mother with respect as though he were the actual husband, and if he has not previously adopted this attitude trouble may arise. Or it may be that he wishes to take the widow of one of his avo as a wife; if he has previously respected the mother-in-law of that avo the way is open, if not, she will make objections which may or may not be overcome by gifts.

It is clear that in the wide sense in which the Shilluk use the term avo for mother-in-law they cannot actually avoid all these women, and certainly not their villagers, for among these avo will be found almost all the women of a previous generation not of the man's own clan. Actually a man is concerned to avoid the avo of those of his avo with whom he comes in contact, or of those whose marriages are personally interesting to him.

As already mentioned, the wife's brother's wife is addressed as avo and seems to be looked upon as similar to a mother-in-law. It is clear that she stands in a relationship quite different from that of a wife's sister or a brother's wife. But no reasons were discovered for treating her as a mother-in-law.

(2) Amongst these relatives may be considered the wife's father and her brothers. They are her natural guardians to whom she may

S.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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complete if her husband dies or leaves her; it is to them that the bride-wealth is given, and the felt that she should be returned should she die childless seems to indicate that the bride-wealth may be considered as compensation to her family for the loss of her children rather than as a payment for her as a wife. The wife's sons and his own both receive part of the bride-wealth, and though they do not belong to her clan they also are so. The avoidance of these relatives of the wife is by no means a oblivious custom (and is not practised by the Dinka). It appears to be considered to the felt that they receive some of the cattle of the bride-wealth.

(c) The attitude towards the husbands of female relatives is the converse of that above. Though a man must observe unqualified behaviour towards the husbands of his sisters and certain cousins, he appears to be in a more favourable position towards them. He receives part of the bride-wealth given by them for his sisters and certain "cousins", and can demand favours from them.

(d) A woman only looks upon her husband's cousins brothers and his mother's sister's sons as her own. She avoids them avidly; any hint of familiarity would be an offence. It is clear that the custom of the avoidance is mutual, and that by reason of its observance the possibility of impropriety is prevented. These relatives of the husband stand in sharp distinction to all others.

Although the Dinka conception of the "in-law" relationship is broad, the restrictions from it are as striking as the inclusions. The wife's sisters do not come under the heading are at all. A man may always treat them with familiarity and, if he wishes to, take one as a second wife; he has prior claim to anyone else but must give the full bride-wealth. We were told that a rich man might marry all the sons of his wife. The wives of the sons are not so; the wives of classmen stand in two definite categories—those with whom sexual intercourse is permissible and those with whom it is not—and to none of these descriptive terms are used. The wives of all these classmen called either no or sons belong to the former class, but intercourse with the wives of any other classmen is said to cause death to both offenders. Care would be taken in dealing with the second class to avoid anything that could possibly be looked on as a compromising situation, such as staying in the house of these relatives when their wives are present, or sitting upon the mat or skin of the women. Thus, though sons called so, they are avoided ceremoniously.

2 Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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The omissions from the "in-law" category are equally important from the woman's point of view. She does not call her husband's parents *ova*, but addresses them as though they were her own grandparents; she treats them with respect, kneels when she hands anything to her father-in-law, and turns her head away when she speaks, but there is no strict avoidance. One of our married informants had his mother living with him; she had a separate hut in his enclosure, but she and his wife could eat together if they wished.

A man calls his son's wife *kwaro*, granddchild; she falls into the category of wives of a classman with whom sexual intercourse is inadmissible, and no doubt the ceremonial behaviour observed between granddchildren and grandparents is also followed between a man and his son's wife. It has been noted before that a woman uses terms to her husband's relatives that she would use to her own relatives of a generation older, and the custom of concurring with the husband's son and being inherited by him has been suggested as a reason for this.

We have seen that there are certain other women who are treated in the same ceremonial manner as are the *ova*; these are wives of relatives, some, but not all, of whom are classmen (see p. 61). These women fall into sharp contrast with those other women (wives of classmen, the *wa* and the *nwa*) with whom connection is permitted during the life of the husband and who may possibly be inherited after his death.

Young people are free to marry the partner of their choice so long as clan exogamy is observed and no genealogical relationship can be traced on the mother's side. Every Shilluk youth is interested in the marriage of his sister and of his father's sister's daughter, for he receives cattle from their bride-wealth and without cattle he cannot himself marry; it is true that his father and his father's sister will assist him to collect cattle for his bride-wealth, but how can they get these except from the marriage of their daughters? A father who used his cattle to marry extra wives while his own sons remained unmarried would be regarded generally with disfavour. The breaking of a marriage—divorce—means the return of cattle to the bridegroom, a difficult matter, as though the bride-wealth is paid to one man, the bride's father or brother, it is immediately distributed and may soon play its part in another's marriage. Thus a man has every reason to desire his sister's marriage to be stable. Yet, in the rules of behaviour that are customary between persons

but the usual fine for making another man's wife pregnant consists of three cows and one bull; if pregnancy does not result the fine is two head of cattle. Fines for seduction are paid to the girl's father and vary from one to three head of cattle according to whether or not the girl is made pregnant. If a woman has committed adultery, she confesses it at the time of childbirth; her husband then exacts the appropriate fines from the man concerned.

If children have been born outside marriage the eventual husband may take them over and will pay extra bridewealth cattle. Failing this, they are brought up in the gol of their maternal uncle and belong to his clan. He will receive the bridewealth paid on the marriage of the girls.(1)

Widow Inheritance

According to Westermann widows are inherited by the brothers of the dead husband or by his sons, who take the wives who are not their own mothers. He then adds that, if children are begotten from these wives, they belong to the family of the dead man and "they are like his own children."(2) This custom of raising up seed to the name of the dead man is general among the Nilotic tribal groups.

KINSHIP AND KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

Ore

The in-law relationship of *ore* has been commented on by Seligman and Pumphrey. It appears to have two particular applications, being used in a narrow and in a wider sense.

A man describes as *ore* all his wife's kinsmen and, strictly, all the kinsmen of the wives of the men of his own generation belonging to his own clan. This extension may be because he is allowed, at any rate in theory, to have access to the wives of such clansmen and temporarily takes over the in-law relationship with their parents. During the first years of marriage the members of the husband's gol have to respect and to avoid the members of the wife's gol. Pumphrey suggests that the basic reason for this is that the initial period of marriage is an unstable one and friction is gradually resolved as the bridewealth is paid off and children are born. To avoid friction the husband does not speak to his *ore* and meets them as little as possible.

In a wider sense the *ore* tie is connected with certain *ore* taboos. The breach of these taboos is believed to cause *cwolo nichwora*, a form of illness believed to affect both mother and child who will die unless the man who induced the mother to break the taboo will split a gourd in two and sacrifice a sheep.(3) There are certain *ore* relationships between lineages and one lineage will be *ore* to another. Thus, if men of lineage A have married women of lineage B, C and D, there are *ore* relationships between A and B; A and C; A and D. In such a case no men of lineages B, C and D

(1) Pumphrey, *S.S.S.* 1941, Vol.XXIV, pp.34-5.
(2) Westermann, *The Shilluk People*, 1912, p.114.
(3) Pumphrey, *S.S.S.* 1941, Vol.XXIV, p.39.

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Dak. In this story, and in the weaker, female associations of the effigy of Col, I think we may see represented by contrast the value which the Shilluk attach to courage and warlike qualities in their king, for the aggressive, headstrong Dak supersedes in importance the weaker eldest son, Col. In songs Dak is the symbol of fighting.[1]

As a result of Dak's and Nyikang's quarrel with Dimo, Nyikang's wife's father, Nyikang and his followers set off once more on their wanderings, while Dimo and his people went in the other direction towards the Bahr-el-Ghazal. It may be noted that Dak, in quarrelling with his mother's people and clowning to his father, showed in an exaggerated form the nature of the loyalties of the royal sons today, as they should ideally be. Their claim to importance for the whole kingdom is through their father the king and his agnates, and not through their mother's people. A conflict of loyalties between the father's and the mother's people, implicit in other Nilotic societies, is here resolved in a myth of the Shilluk kingship by the aggression of Dak against his maternal uncle Dimo. The main incidents in the further migration of Nyikang, Dak, and their followers, are a fight with Gare, the son of the Sun, Cang, and the crossing of a river, said to have been the Bahr-el-Ghazal, beyond which Nyikang settled his people in their present kingdom. Between them and their present home, there was a river covered with the floating vegetation, the *sudd*, which even now accumulates on these reaches of the Nile and its tributaries. One of Nyikang's followers, an albino, asked Nyikang to clear a way for the people to cross by spearing him in the river. Nyikang did so, and this letting of blood cleared a way for the Shilluk to reach their present home.[2] Hence one of Nyikang's many praise-names, or titles of honour, means 'crosser of the river' (the Bahr-el-Ghazal). The fight with the Sun and his son, an incident which seems to suggest to Hofmayr[3] some early contact between the Shilluk and the Galla, occurred when the Shilluk were temporarily settled on the river bank, before crossing. Nyikang then lost a cow. It was reported to be in the land of the Sun, and Dak set out with his followers to reclaim it. He fought with Gare, the son of the Sun, and cut off Gare's hand or finger in order to get a silver ring or bracelet. In the course of the fight, Nyikang drove the Sun back into the sky, and revived his army by sprinkling them with water, or by touching them with the silver bracelet. Another version is that Nyikang made the Sun shine at night so that the fight might go on.[4] Others of Nyikang's titles of honour refer to this victory over the Sun. The silver from the ring or bracelet is said to have been used for silver emblems—a bracelet and spear

[1] Hofmayr, 1925, p. 63.

[2] Westermann, 1912, *et al.*

[3] Hofmayr, 1925, p. 61, where the Shilluk names for the Sun and his son, Cang and Gare, are said to be similar to those for a division of the Galla, *Tungura*, *Tungura*, or *Djindjira*, and other details of the story are said to resemble those of the Galla. If this is so, there must have been some contact between the Western Dinka of the Bahr-el-Ghazal and the Galla, since they have the same story.

[4] I do not give all the details of this story, of which there are many versions. The version here given follows Hofmayr, 1925, pp. 60–62, and Westermann, 1912, pp. 159–61.

9 Howell E-5 (1937-1950) 1951 F223 Shilluk F221

that the more definite answers may be found. Whether this established and institutionalised ownership is the result of diffusion from elsewhere, a legacy from ancient Egypt,[1] or the result of spontaneous development from the primitive religious functionaries who exist in embryo form among other Shilluk-speaking[2] and, indeed, other Nilotic peoples, is a controversial subject which I do not propose to discuss here.

Territorially, Shilluk country is divided into two provinces, within which are the northern and southern provinces of Manange and Tung, eleven divisions, and finally each division has a number of settlements which are referred to as *path*.[3] The settlement is the largest political unit which has a permanent and stable function in Shilluk society today.[4] The members occupy a common and clearly defined territory, have a common grazing and fishing area held collectively, a common name, and a common system of agrarian administration.[5] Within each settlement are a number of villages or hamlets, each of which, with its offshoots, is occupied by a discrete kinship group, the local lineage of one of the main Shilluk clans. One of these lineages is usually dominant and, though it does not give its name to the settlement, its leader is generally recognised as holding some authority over the rest of the community. In each settlement there are also usually representative lineages of *dwonh* who sometimes, but not always, have assumed a position of dominance within that settlement, usually by force of numbers. There are also long-established lineages of *Jagwal* who have lived in close association with *dwonh* or tending one or more of the numerous royal shrines.[6]

There are frequent movements and migrations, both of individuals and of small domestic groups. The persons who thus take up residence in other parts of the country retain links with kinsmen in their original home and these links continue for a period. The number of generations which pass before they are forgotten is indeterminate and variable, but the factor of territorial association is an important one. Lineages of one clan living in one area are likely to retain these links and remain bound by rules of exogamy however far removed they may be in the kinship structure. Moreover, common residence in one village area or even one settlement may create bonds which are equal in strength to kinship ties and may even carry with it a bar to intermarriage. In such circumstances there is usually the fiction of common descent through the female line. Among the Shilluk there is a bar to marriage with close relatives on the maternal side carried to three or four generations, but common residence sometimes creates a more permanent prohibition.

[1] See Seligman, C. G., *Egypt and Negro Africa*. George Routledge & Sons, 1934, p. 60.

[2] For example, the Anuak subtribe, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Political System of the Anuak of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*, Monographs on Social Anthropology, London School of Economics, 1940; and Hofmayr, J. H., *The Lango*.

[3] *path*. A more elastic and relative term than I had realised when writing an article on this subject in 1937. *path* simply means "home" or "homeland" and Shilluk refer to *path path*, "Shilluk-land". The word itself has the same relativity as the Nuer word *cieng* and the Dinka word *wut*.

[4] These have, of course, been changes of boundaries and provinces of Sudan and Sudan administration of any expository society. The nature of the system in Shilluk country, however, precludes any great change. The boundaries of *bagh* are vague, with clear and unambiguous as boundaries, whether [illegible] associated as enemy, stranger, kinsman, or subject [illegible] enemies.

[5] This is a significant fact and one which throws much light on the true nature of the Shilluk *path*. Where are examples where Nilotic tribes are said that age are co-extensive in a segment as whole tribes, but these are exceptional facts and reflect boundaries (Nuer) or, like the Shilluk, is limited to smaller segments of society (Dinka, Shilluk).

[6] Lineages of the *dwonh* are referred to by the name of the *wak*, *agwal* (pen of a *wak*), or sometimes *Agwal* of a *wak* who founded them. Thus *dwonh* Fadiet, *Jagwal* Adong, &c. Sometimes, *dwonh* are distinguished as *dwonh wak* Fadiet, *dwonh agwal* Adong, &c.

11: Oglee 36-5 (ca. 1918)1919 F 223 Oglee F 223

766 to encircle him with his legs. The medicine man then spits on his hands, and strikes the patient lightly. He then places his hands in the arm pits of the afflicted person, and proceeds to kneed his whole body, and then concludes by stretching the patient's fingers. A chicken is then killed, put in a cooking vessel, and boiled. A burning torch is then passed in circles about the head of the patient. Three kitty pegs are then driven in the ground near his chest, and the medicine man taking water in his hands blesses it, and sprinkles it on the ground by the pegs, and as he sprinkles it he prays: "Holy my breast that the man may live. I have wanted, the maiden mate with you, you are God, it was you, who created, and the tree (medicine)."

767 Others add to the above by grinding up a bit of a certain plant, and giving it to the patient in water. Then grass is tied in little knots, and scattered on the road, and the patient is then put in a house, and a spear stuck up near his head to guard him.

768 The evil medicine men kill their own relatives first so as to inherit their property.

769 Sometimes when the evil medicine man is old, he relents and leaves all his old practices, and turns his powers to help people. When they try to help, they are very powerful. A story was told by different people, but most of them were eye witnesses of the cure, though they had it from a man who was present.

770 To begin the cure, two men were paid. The patient was tied as he could not move, and laid on the ground. The medicine men then called his two big snakes, and when they came to him, he said: "You are the ones, and the fire, think ye help him? If you cannot, go to him." The snakes went to the poor victim, and much to his terror crawled all over him, and they even went so far as to lick his face. The patient called loudly for help, and even wept. The medicine men called for water, and sprinkled it on the patient, after he had blessed it, and he announced that the patient was cured.

771 Another reformed malignant medicine man, had such power over a certain bit of water that if a person fished in it without permission, some mishap would ever take him. The required permission would be given when the fisherman promised to give us a fee the first fish taken, and

Ch. Howell & Thomson E, C-4 (1941-1946)1946
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of the Derweh division came together, and so did all sections of Fankeda division, but the component sections of the Gelhainy division split and formed separate contingents. It is probable that there is no deep tradition behind this, but that grouping is largely governed by what is considered a suitable size for a contingent. Lemmen is a small section and could not produce a contingent of its own, so is joined up with Kedeh its larger neighbour. It is not clear whether the sections of Shilluk society have any definite traditional function to perform at the funeral rites of a rok. The rok had originally planned that the four days of dancing should be apportioned as follows:—

1. Fankeda 2. Gelhainy 3. Derweh 4. Fankeda (again)

This arrangement was carried out on the first day, and the dancing confined to Fankeda division, but Dyigir turned up and were regarded as intruders. Next morning, however, everyone else appeared, and the decision was taken to cut the dance to two days only.

The late rok's mother (Note 3) was a Nuba woman from near Fungor, which is on the western boundaries of Shilluk country. Some of her relatives arrived on the second day of the ceremony. Naturally they played no significant part, but it is interesting that they should have come at all.

Layout of the village Fashoda Fash

Fash Fadil, also called Abwogaiko, "fear of death", the village which the late rok built for himself, (Note 4) is of medium size and of the usual Shilluk type. There are three cattle byres built round an open space, which is about 70 yards in diameter. The houses are built round the outside of this open space and five of these, in which the wives of the late rok reside, had been repaired and the fences round them renewed. The tomb of the late rok is in the house where his senior wife lived, and in form is no different from any Shilluk homestead except for the eight cross bands on the fence and a stockade of willow outside, which was built after the late rok's burial. This

29:Dempsey M-5 (1960-1954) 1955
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break up a Christian family in that manner, and that if the women and children were not returned to their home within three days, the matter would be taken to the king. Happily we were on safe ground in threatening this. A short time before there had been a similar case in Lul where a Christian family was concerned and the Fathers had presented successfully to the king, who ordered the family to be returned. The chief, hearing this, gave in gracefully and the woman and children were brought back.

And what of the happy father of the bride? Does he assume the airs and authority of a cattle baron at thus being enriched by ten cows? Poor old father, alas, will be fortunate if he gets one or two of the dowry to call his own. He does, indeed, as befitting his dignity as head of the family, receive the cattle, but the same family will take very good care that they do not remain long in the paternal shippen. He probably has growing sons hungry for cattle to build up their own dowries, but if it should happen that the Lord has not blessed him with male issue, his own unmarried brothers will clamour for their share; his wife's strident voice will be heard advancing the claims of her brothers; uncles and nephews and in-laws will take up the cry, some in strong, others in less certain terms according to their proximity to or remoteness from the immediate family circle, and the dispute will continue until the final settlement is made and the cows are dispersed to the remotest parts of the land. One thing is sure, and that is that if anyone suffers from the division of the spoils it will be father. In the course of a few years the cattle of a dowry will have changed hands several times, having been split up and absorbed into other herds, again and again handed over as part of a bride-price, and again and again finding new owners among some girl's relatives, ranging the length and breadth of the Shilluk country and back again, shifting and changing, being collected and dispersed, only to be collected and dispersed again. And so it will go on until an individual cow is deemed no longer worthy of inclusion in a dowry, when it will be sold for butcher's meat or slaughtered for a wedding or a